

1292^{c.}
*The Influence or Efficacy of outward Majesty
and Beauty in the House of GOD, to excite
and promote true Devotion inwardly in the
Minds of the Worshippers.*

695. 9. 12
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133
A

S E R M O N

Preach'd at the

P A R I S H - C H U R C H

O F

St. *Benedict* - Fink, London,

On SUNDAY, October 8. 1732.

A T T H E

Opening of the said Parish-Church, after its
being Repair'd and Beautified.

*The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree,
the pine-tree and the box together, to beautify the place
of my Sanctuary; and I will make the place of my
feet glorious. Isai. lx. 13.*

By THEOD. WATERLAND, D. D.

Minister of St. *Benedict*-Fink, London.

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. INNYS and R. MANBY, at
the West End of St. *Paul*'s. MDCCXXXVI.

Printed by J. Smith, at the
Printers Office, in the Strand,
near the Theatre Royal, in the
City of London.

BERMON

PARISH-CHURCH

OF

St. Benedict's-Tank, London.

October 3. 1782.

AT THE

Printers Office, in the Strand,
near the Theatre Royal, in the
City of London.

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LONDON.

Printed by W. Lint and R. Mallett,
at the West End of St. Paul's, London.



TO THE
Parishioners *and* Inhabitants
OF
St. Benedict-Fink, London.

GENTLEMEN,

THIS *Sermon*, which I have
fair *Reason* to *think*, and
would have *Leave* to *say*,
was generally well receiv'd
in the *Hearing*, will not
fail, I hope, of being equally well ap-
prov'd in the *Reading*. It had waited
on you much *sooner*, but that having
not been compos'd at *first* with any de-
termin'd *View* to the *Press*, I was for
some time *irresolute* and *uncertain*, whe-
ther or no to let it appear in *publick*,
and take its *Fate* in the *World*. But
reflecting with myself at length, that I
could never expect any more *favourable*
Opportunity, either of *publishing* my
A 2 *Relation*

DEDICATION.

Relation to you, or of testifying my Respect for you, I came in the End to this Conclusion, Not to let slip an Occasion, the Return whereof I was not like to live to see. What I here present you with, in Print, is the very same I Preach'd, only with the Addition of some few Things, and these originally in my Notes, but omitted in the Delivery, lest I should have detain'd you longer than the usual Time allotted to a Sermon. And should any one surmise that the properest Season of presenting you with this Discourse had been immediately, while it was yet fresh from the Pulpit; I answer him, that its approaching you thus late hath, however, one good Advantage attending it, (which I profess to have in my Intention) it now serves to remind you of a Sort of Duties that, at the Time of its being preach'd, were not easily overlook'd, but since that time may seem to be forgotten. I am,

GENTLEMEN,

HACKNEY,
Jan. 12. 1736.

Your most faithful,
humble Servant in Christ,

Theod. Waterland.



ISAIAH lx. 13.

*The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee,
the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box
together, to beautify the place of my
sanctuary; and I will make the place
of my feet glorious.*



THESE so elegant and lofty Words
of the *Prophet*, spoken as in the
Person of *Almighty God*, and that
by way of *Comfort* to his People
encouraging them to look for *Deliverance*
and *Rest*, after a sad and tedious Season
of *Captivity* and *Distress*, will readily be al-
low'd, I suppose, (what hath been commonly
observ'd of those *prophetick Scriptures* especi-
ally of the *Old Testament*) to carry a *twofold*
Meaning; the *one*, respecting more immedi-
ately that State of Things which obtain'd in or
near the *Prophet's* own Times; the *other*, bear-
ing more remote regard to those so distant
Times of *Christ*, or State of the *Christian*
Church, that should be under the *Messiah*. The
First of these is what hath usually been stil'd the
Literal, Historical, or Primary Meaning;
the

the *Last*, the *Spiritual*, *Mystical*, or *Secondary*. Take the *Text*, according to its *Literal*, *Historicall*, or *Primary* Meaning, it refers to the *Jews in particular*, and their *triumphant Return* at length from *Babylon*, when they were actually to be employ'd in *rebuilding*, or *raising anew*, their *Temple*, after its having lain many Years in miserable *Desolation* and *Ruins*; and speaks pretty much as follows: *The glory of Lebanon*, the Cedar-Tree, for which Mount *Lebanon* is so justly famous; *shall come unto thee*, shall be diligently sought for, and carefully brought up to *Jerusalem*; *the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together*, these and other the like curious and costly *Materials*; *to beautify the Place of my Sanctuary*, to adorn and set off my *Holy-place* or *Temple*; *and I will make the place of my feet glorious*, and I will cause that *sacred seat* of my *special presence* upon *earth*, to appear again mostly in all its *pristine pomp and splendor*. Take the *Text* according to its *Spiritual*, *Mystical*, or *Secondary* Meaning, it refers to *Christians at large*, in *Ages* then at *Distance*, their growing up into a powerful *Body of Men*, and gaining jointly *Strength and Numbers*, when they should every where prevail and prove victorious, see their bitterest *Enemies at peace* with them, and obtain a *Settlement*; and speaks pretty near to this Effect: *The glory of Lebanon*, all possible Excellency and Honour; *shall come unto thee*, shall be by me in future Times conferr'd upon my favourite Institution of the *Gospel*; *the fir-tree,*
the

the pine-tree, and the box together, every thing that can contribute and convey any Ornament or Grace ; to beautify the place of my Sanctuary, to dignify and distinguish my Church under the Messiah ; and I will make the place of my feet glorious, and I will thenceforth be ador'd and serv'd by a faithful and select Race of Worshipers, not only inwardly, in Truth and Purity, but also outwardly, in all the utmost Magnificence of sensible Appearance, such as best becometh my Greatness, and most effectually advanceth my Esteem and Reverence.

These are the *two* different, but consistent, Interpretations of my Text, answering that *two-fold* Reference of the Prophecy it contains and sets forth, to *Jews*, first, more *closely*, to *Christians*, next, somewhat more *remotely*. And for the Prophecy in the Text, as it relates distinctly to the *Jewish Church*, it then, we may take notice by the way, began to have its Accomplishment, when that People had, by a publick Decree of *Cyrus*, procur'd Liberty of Returning to their Native Countrey of *Judæa*, and Re-edifying their Temple, after a seventy Years Captivity at *Babylon* ; * which Temple, commonly call'd *the second*, and sometimes *Zerubabel's Temple*, tho' it came far short of *the first*, or that of *Solomon*, so far indeed, as to pass for *nothing in Comparison*, † and to cause that those antient Men, who had seen the Beauties and Excellencies of the *former House*, even *wept*
with

* Prideaux's Connect. P. 1. B. 2, 3. p. 103, &c.

† Hagg. ii. 3.

with a loud voice at laying the foundations of this latter, || was, yet, truly a very sumptuous pile of Building, not altogether unbecoming the God of Israel, and such as might fairly justify these exalted Strains of the Prophet; *The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.* For the Prophecy in the Text, as it relates to Christians, it then began to be fulfill'd, when, by Constantine's embracing of the Faith, the Church of Christ had obtain'd Rest round about, first rais'd her Head to behold Indemnity and Favour, and saw herself not simply tolerated, but, besides, established; when mercy and truth, it might be strictly said, had met together, and righteousness and peace had kissed each other; when the most persecuted Religion, (unequal Treatment for being the most pure!) was taken into Protection of the Civil Magistrate, and Kings and Emperors made it jointly their Delight and Business, to consult as well the solemn Pomp, as solid Power of Christianity: To this so happy Time, and hopeful State of Things, we suppose the Prophet Isaiah, after his usual and elegant way of Metaphor and Figure, to allude in the Words of the Text, *The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.*

But

Beauty and Devotion.

5

But I shall still attempt to draw a little nearer, and presume upon a *closer* and yet more *home Application* of the *Words before me*, namely, to *this very Place*, wherein we are *now met*, and *Audience here assembled*; our solemnizing, in usual form, *the opening of this sacred House*, which we have seen *shut up* for a *necessary Season*, to the end we might return to our wonted Exercises of *Devotion* in it with fresh Sprightliness and Vigor, when *Comeliness and Cleanliness* should invite and inspire, *Deformity and Impurity* no more damp and dispirit: *The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my Feet glorious.* These Words may not improperly pass with us, as a *peremptory and positive Declaration* of Almighty God, importing, that it is his *Will and Pleasure* to be worshipp'd in the *beauty of holiness*, meaning, in his *Holy Court or Temple*, ἐν αὐλῇ ἁγίᾳ αὐτοῦ, * not barely venerable, thro' the *Divine Presence* in it, but *admirable* too, for all that *Art and Nature* can contribute to the *outward Splendor* of it; in which *Light or View*, my *Text*, 'tis plain, falls patly in with the *Occasion*, and speaks up roundly to the *Purpose* of our *present Meeting*. And yet, say that my *Text* is to be consider'd barely as *prophetical*, and not *preceptive* of that *external Majesty or Magnificence* of *Jewish or Christian Worship*, even under *this Consideration*, it cannot but

* Psalm xcvi. 9. Septuag. Version.

be look'd upon as bearing somewhat of a friendly *Aspect* towards ourselves, and may seem, as it were, penn'd *aforehand*, purposely to applaud and to congratulate our late good Offices and Benefactions shown and done to this our *Sanctuary of God*. And that I may be so happy as to usher in our *Return* to these our wonted Exercises of *Devotion*, after the necessary Time of *Discontinuance*, with something both entertaining and improving, something both suiting our *present Case*, and arising from my *present Text*, I shall lay down this following *general Position*, as Matter for farther proceeding; namely, *The Influence or Efficacy of outward Majesty and Beauty in the House of God, to excite and promote true Devotion inwardly in the Minds of the Worshippers*: Which *general Position*, I shall assert and try to make out,

- I. From the *universal Sense* of Mankind, that runs in special Favour of it: And,
- II. From the *Nature or Reason of the Thing*, consider'd strictly in it self. And,

I. That we have actually the *universal Sense of Mankind appearing in special Favour of my general Position*, I hope to evidence and evince most clearly, by a View of their *Practice*; that is, I shall presume to decide and determine concerning their *Sentiments*, by that surest *Index or Interpreter* of them, their *uniform and constant Management*. Now, as far as we are able to come at any Knowledge of *Man-kind*,

kind, relating to their *Conduct* or *manner of Ordering their Affairs*, it hath *always*, and *every where*, no *Time* or *Part* of the *World* excepted, been a *prevailing Custom* with *People* to seek to render their appropriated *Places* or *Houses of religious Worship*, sumptuous and splendid, by means of *outward Ornaments and Decorations*: And whence this, but that they thereby propos'd and aim'd to conciliate *Regard and Reverence* towards them, or give the *Minds of the Worshippers* due Emotions of *Duty and Devotion*, through strong and deep Impressions of *Dread and Distance* convey'd to them by the *Source or Channel* of those *fleshy Organs of Sensation*? To take the Matter up from the *Jews*, and from these near as far back as their first settling into the *Form or Constitution* of a *Church*: Higher up than this, I conclude we need not go, when before such Time, *publick Worship*, either that of the *True God*, or of *False ones*, was every whit as plain and simple as were the *Lives* of their *Votaries*; scarce aspiring to any thing greater and better than *Groves and Mounts, open Altars, and expos'd Oratories in High-places*: There were, as yet, either no *Temples*, or *appropriated Houses*, rais'd and dedicated to the *Living God* or *Dumb Idols*, or none of any *Significance and Name*. The first considerable *Temple* the *World* ever knew and saw, was, as is generally believ'd and maintain'd by *learned Men*,* that *moveable, portable, or itinerant* one of the

* Jurieu's Crit. Hist. vol. 1. part 2. p. 289. Shuckford's Connect. vol. 2. lib. 8. p. 366.

Israelites, usually distinguish'd by the Name of the *Tabernacle*, which *Moses*, by Command from *God*, erected in the *Wilderness*, presently upon that People's being come out of *Egypt*. * Indeed, not very long after the erecting of this moveable, portable, or itinerant *Temple*, or *Tabernacle* of the *Israelites*, and an express Injunction given them, that, when they had gotten full and quiet Possession of the promis'd Land, they should provide themselves of a permanent and fix'd place or house, which the Lord their God should chuse, to cause his name to dwell there; † not very long after this, I say, we must suppose that the *Heathens* had their *Temples* too, and these, even rivalling, in some measure, that of the One supreme God, in Majesty and Beauty, both of Structure and Furniture; but it doth not so well appear, or it cannot so well be prov'd, (what hath been observ'd by very able Judges ||) that they had any such before. So far was the *Israelitish Tabernacle*, or *Jewish Temple* from being form'd upon *Heathen Plans*, and being erected in Imitation only of *Temples*, or *Houses of Worship*, originally the Invention of *Idolaters*, and appropriated by Them to the Service of impure Spirits and Demons, (which some have endeavour'd to obtrude upon us for real Fact ‡) that on the contrary, those *Heathens*, we have the best Grounds to think, borrow'd wholly from the *Jews* in this particular; and

* *Exod.* 25. † *Deut.* 12. 11. || *Jurieu, and Shuckford, ubi supra.* ‡ *Spencer de Leg. Hebr. Vol. 2. lib. 3. Diff. 1. p. 663. Diff. 6. p. 892. Ed. Chapel. Compare Shuckford, ubi supra.*

and receiv'd the *Hint* of raising and enriching their *Idol Temples*, from what the *True God* had commanded his *select People*, relating to his own. I shall then be permitted to begin my Account from the *Tabernacle* of the *Israelites*, that earliest *publick Edifice*, meaning, of *Note and Distinction*, made sacred to *Religion*. This *Tabernacle* of the *Israelites*, for the *Age* especially wherein it was set up; the *Circumstances* of the *People* to whom it peculiarly belong'd, and *Design* of the Thing itself, which had been contriv'd only to serve a *present Exigency*, this *Tabernacle* of the *Israelites* was certainly a very excellent and admirable Piece of *Art and Workmanship*, embellish'd and adorn'd with all imaginable *Grace and Elegance*, in view principally that those *Israelites* might not fail to approach it with the more *solemn Access*, and be struck with the *profounder Awe* of Him who resided in it, but was *invisible* to the Eyes of Mortals. I cannot now have time to dwell minutely on Particulars, but the *general Disposition* of the *Tabernacle* was certainly most exquisite and curious; which Thing appears undeniably clear from those *special Directions* given about it, both as to the erecting and furnishing it. And here we are plainly led to see, how very fairly *Majesty or Magnificence* of outward *Show and Appearance*, in *Temples* sacred to religious Service, claims to be coeval even with *Temples themselves*; which again suggests or rather demonstrates to us, that it was, even from the beginning, the current Sense of Mankind,

kind, that *Divine Worship* did not so well *subsist* and *thrive* without it. And should it be objected to what I say, that those *Excellencies* and *Elegancies* of the *Israelitish Tabernacle* were, all of them, of *Almighty God's* own immediate *contriving* and *ordering*, who *inspir'd* the very *Workmen* with *Skill* to execute the *Design*, * we shall but be the more *confirm'd* thereby, as to our *main Point*, seeing that, in this Case, we have a Declaration, even of the *Heavenly Wisdom*, on the Side of *outward Pomp* and *Splendor*; and instead of those *disputable* or *fallible Decisions* of *Men*, can appeal to that *unexceptionable* and *unerring Authority* which is of *God*. From the *Israelitish Tabernacle*, come we down to the *Jewish Temple*, where we find, if possible, yet more of *Majesty* or *Magnificence*, curious *Workmanship* and costly *Furniture*. The *Temple* of *Solomon* particularly (without insinuating any *Disparagement* to those of others) was, while it stood, the *Wonder* and *Glory* of the *World*, whose *Grandeur* never had been, and perhaps never will be, *equall'd*; so stupendous the *Fabrick*, so rich the *Appurtenances*. But this being a Matter generally well *known* and *acknowledg'd*, I shall tarry no longer, than just to *remark* concerning it, that, *Almighty God* having chosen this as the *special Place* of his *earthly Residence*, and appointed it the *prime Seat* of his *Audience*, he seems to have countenanc'd and encourag'd the setting it out with

* Exod. xxxv. 30, 35.

with all imaginable *Advantages* and *Improvements* of *Art* and *Elegance*, the better to possess the Minds of the *Jews* with a more than ordinary *Veneration* for it, and awful *Distance* towards it, and thereby skreen it from too familiar and rude *Approaches*; much as we see the *Honour* and *Dignity* of *Temporal Princes* and *Potentates* upheld and maintain'd by a kind of artificial and affected *Pomp* and *Parade*, or by a sort of studied *Ceremonies of State*, these being apt to convey *respectful Impressions* to the Soul, and fill it with the most dutiful *Sentiments of Reverence and Fear*. Thus stood the Case with the *Jews*. As to *Heathens*, I have already signifi'd above, that they too had their *Temples*, and these erected and ornamented with near equal *Art* and *Expence*, as those of the *Living and True God*. Indeed, *Heathens* appear to have taken *Pattern* by the *Jews*, and to have been instructed what to do in *Honour* of their *Idol Deities*, by what they saw done in *Respect* to the great and only *God of Heaven and Earth*. And verily, they might naturally enough from hence have entertain'd and espous'd the *Notion* of religious *Worship's* receiving much *Life* and *Strength* by means of outward *Show* and *Pomp*, in regard that, if these could heighten and advance the *Worship* of *this or that God*, it was reasonably to be presum'd they should do it as to the *Worship* of all others. 'Tis allow'd, *Pagan Worship* was both *superstitious* and *idolatrous*; but as *Pagan Worshippers*, we may think, would not themselves yield up *this*
Point

Point to us, they might fairly enough conclude the Case must be the same of *all* religious Worship, as of *any*, respecting distinctly its *Energy* and *Power*; and that *theirs*, no less than *that* of the *Jews*, was capable of being *enforc'd* and *enliven'd* by means of a *pompous Outside* and dazzling Brightness of *sensible Appearance*. We of the *Reform'd Persuasion* stick not to charge those of the *Romish Communion* with a way of *Worship* at once *superstitious* and *idolatrous*, not much unlike to *that of Heathens*; and were we *challeng'd* to it, could clearly prove our *Allegation*: Yet, thro' a dextrous Use and Management, especially of *outward Advantages*, thro' a strict Attachment to the *Pomp of Ceremonies*, and an *exquisite Magnificence* pursued in all their *Offices* and *Churches*, the *Romanists* have *hitherto* prevail'd generally to recommend and support the very *grossest Sort* of all *Christian Worship*, which otherwise must long ago have dwindled into *nothing*, and even pass'd out of *Remembrance*. This one Instance may suffice to satisfy us, that, as *outward Elegancies and Ornaments* contribute to the *Life and Vigor* of pure and sound *Devotion*, so, they may be applied too to countenance and keep up that which is *corrupt and faulty*: The *last* of these cannot indeed *flourish* or *subsist* at all without them; and yet the *first*, by reason of the *Weakness of our Nature*, which is ever most effectually wrought upon thro' *sensible Impressions*, may be justly thought to *need* them. But no more of *Heathens* and *Heathen Worship*, which
Hea-

Heathen Worship we find still cherish'd and sustain'd by the like *Methods* that gave *Life and Spirit* to the *Jewish Worship*, understanding, *Majesty* or *Magnificence* of *Externals*. From *Heathens* proceed we to *Christians*, with whom the same *Notions*, we may fairly reckon, still prevail'd, seeing that the same *Conduct*, we are sure, still continued. *Christians*, when now the World was generally become *Christian*, show'd themselves, we know, no less eager and intent upon raising sumptuous Edifices for the Purpose of religious *Worship*, and enriching them with all the *Embellishments* of *Painting*, *Sculpture*, and the like, than *Jews* and *Heathens*, both of them, had done before. It looks as if they scorn'd to be exceeded, in *Generosity* and *Beneficence*, by those their *Heathen* or their *Jewish Ancestors*; or, as if they esteem'd it an *Essential* of their *Religion*, to offer only of their best and choicest unto God: But, indeed, they chiefly meant the doing *Honour* to the *Christian Worship*; as being verily persuaded in their Minds, that nothing so effectually animates and enlivens our religious *SerVICES*, as that *Majesty* or *Magnificence* of outward *Appearance* under which we set about them. Matter of *Fact* is most indisputable and undoubted, that *primitive Christians* ever greatly triumph'd and exulted in the *Elegancy* and *Splendor* of their *Churches*, and aim'd, if possible, at possessing inward *Purity* in outward *Beauty*; which, like apples of gold in pictures

asures of silver *, cannot but mutually recommend and illustrate each other. But whereas, *the most high*, we have been taught, † *dwell-eth not in temples made with hands*, that is, is not taken or properly mov'd by any *Elegance* or *Beauty* of Place, it must be that such *Elegance* or *Beauty*, respecting particularly the *House of God*, can only regard the *Worshippers* There; and this, in Consideration that *Elegance* or *Beauty* hath a natural *Influence* or *Efficacy* to quicken and invigorate our *Devotions*. And, it is more than probable, we have here what was in *principal View* with *primitive Christians*, when they so warmly affected, and industriously pursued, *Magnificence* of *Worship*. For a Space indeed, during a State of extreme *Poverty* and *Persecution*, *Christians* must have had but few Places of *publick Assembly* for *Divine Worship*; and these few, like themselves, *mean* and *ill provided*: Yet, as soon as they well saw *Plenty* and *Peace*; were rescued from the *Oppressor*; and could be secure of *Life* and *Property*; a very remarkable *Emulation*, even bordering upon the *criminal*, seiz'd them, of out-doing and out-shining one another in *stately Edifices* and *rich Accommodations*, appropriated and dedicated to *God* and *Christ*. The Time would fail me to treat of *Particulars*: In *general*, happy was that *Person* or *People*, in those earlier *Ages of Christianity*, that could compass the *raising of a Church*; or but contribute gene-

rously

* Prov. xxv. 11. † Acts vii. 48. Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2.

roussly to the *Repairs of one*; or only add any new *Improvement or Grace*; or so much as give a Supply of *Books, Vestments, and the like necessary Utensils* *. And this *Spirit of Beneficence* remain'd in full Strength, while yet the *Spirit of Piety* continued undecay'd; which may seem to suggest to us, that a *Zeal for Religion, and a Zeal for the Honour of God in his House*, are inseparably united, and actually rise or sink together; whence it must follow, that we may ordinarily measure the devout or indevout *Disposition of a People or Parish*, (not under calamitous Circumstances) by the neat or slovenly *Appearance of the Place* wherein they are us'd to assemble for religious *Worship*.

To recapitulate, or briefly sum up what I have been saying: If we are but allow'd to collect the *Sense of Mankind* from a View of their *Conduct*, (and, for the most part, certainly we may be allow'd it) seeing that the *Practice of the World* hath all along gone in favour of *Elegancy and Ornaments in Places appropriated to religious Worship*, which *Practice* necessarily supposeth some *Motive*, and no *Motive* so plausible as the *Power* these might be thought to have over the *Minds of People*, to draw and engage their *Reverence and Regards*: Things being thus, my way is so far clear, that we have actually the *universal Sense of Mankind appearing in special Favour of my general Position*, namely, *The Influence or Efficacy of outward Majesty and*
C 2 Beauty

* Cave's prim. Christ. Part 1. Ch. 6. Bingham's Antiq. V. 3. B. 8. Ch. 2.

Beauty in the House of God, to excite and promote true Devotion inwardly in the Minds of the Worshippers. I come next to assert and argue my Point,

II. From the *Nature or Reason of the Thing*, consider'd strictly in itself. And under this my *present Head*, my Endeavours must be to show, that *outward Majesty and Beauty* in the House of God have even a *natural Energy or Virtue* to create in us right *inward Dispositions*, such as best suit and serve our solemn Exercises of *Piety and Devotion*; which cannot but be manifest to all that please to reflect with me, what *Aptitude or Tendency outward Majesty and Beauty* have,

1. To raise, refresh, and cheer the *Spirits*.
2. To calm, compose, and sweeten the *Temper*.
3. To elevate, refine, and ennoble the *Thoughts*. And,
4. To warm, quicken, and enflame the *Affections*.

1. For the *Aptitude or Tendency of outward Majesty and Beauty in the House of God*, to raise, refresh, and cheer the *Spirits*. Our *Spirits*, the prime Instruments of *Motion* and principal Means of *Action*, are usually suppos'd by *Naturalists* to be a kind of *volatile Fluids*, extremely fine and subtle, invisible and imperceptible, otherwise than in their *Effects* and

and Operations; which *Effects* and *Operations* are various and widely differing, according as is the *State* or *Crafs* of the *Spirits*, good or bad. It cannot then be any Matter of *Labour* or *Difficulty* to us, to conceive, that, when these our *Spirits* are indeed of the most nice and delicate *Contexture*, a little Thing seemingly should have great Power over them, to raise or sink, refresh or clog, cheer or damp them: And we daily, nay hourly see it so, that, tho' the *Spirits* are of prime Importance, and nothing to be done without them, yet are they up or down at every Turn, as Occasions and Incidents fall out, and mount or subside in Consequence of external Appearances, and those sensible Impressions that are the Result of such Appearances. To our more immediate and direct Purpose: We must, of course, all of us, have had full Experience and Conviction, what a sullen or a smiling Face of Things can do, the one, to discourage and depress, the other, to exhilarate and revive. Gloominess or Darkness shall rarely fail to introduce a Lowness or Languor on the *Spirits*, when Light-someness or Brightness shall, on the contrary, equally give them Vivacity and Vigor. We may weaken the strongest *Spirits* that are, by presenting Men continually or only with dismal and dolorous Sight and Spectacles; as we may strengthen the weakest, by entertaining Men altogether or mostly with gay and splendid Images and Objects. Even a cloudy and lowering Sky shall commonly flat or fetter the *Spirits*, which

which again recover their *Liveliness* or *Liberty* with the *Return of the Sun*. Such is very plainly the *Mechanism* of the *human Constitution*, as that *sensible Things*, taken-in especially by the *Eye*, shall greatly affect, and either greatly relieve, or greatly load the *Spirits*: And, though it may be difficult precisely to account for these *Effects*, yet are no *Effects* more ordinary or more observ'd by us. And these same *Effects* that we see of outward *Beauty* to fortify the *Spirits*, or of *Deformity* to enfeeble them, in any Place of vulgar and secular Resort, these same *Effects* must, of course, obtain in Places separated and made sacred to religious Worship. A lightsome or gloomy House of God shall influence alike, and to like Purpose, with any other lightsome or gloomy House we are pleas'd to consider or suppose. Next,

2. For the *Aptitude* or *Tendency* of outward Majesty and Beauty in the House of God, to calm, compose, and sweeten the Temper. There is a Temper proper to Devotion, as well as *Spirits* necessary for it; and it seems as if the former very much depended on the latter. But, without interesting the *Spirits* more directly in the Case, most certain it is, that outward Majesty and Beauty are of very notable Force or Efficiency, respecting the Mind, to dispose and qualify it for religious Worship. There is not any Agency or Operation more sensible and seen, though we can no otherwise solve it than by saying, that it is in our Constitution

Beauty and Devotion. 19

stitution to admit of such or such Impressions from without; which, allowing it a *satisfactory Account*, will not, I suppose, be deem'd so strictly *philosophical*: It is to be reckoned in the Number of those *Effects* that are much better felt than understood; and to deny or dispute every thing in this Kind, were to make mad Work in the World. Let us put the matter upon Experiment, leading the honest and upright Worshipper, first, into a Place uncouth and rustick, for the most part naked of Ornaments, and destitute of almost every Convenience; and leading him, next, into a Place curious and comely, set off with all Embellishments of Art and Nature, and well provided with every thing of Use and Decency: He must, I easily imagine, be very differently affected by these so different Appearances, and find himself in a far better Temper of Devotion, more sedate, serious, and settled, under the Influences of Order and Gracefulness, than of Irregularity and Awkwardness. There are, I confess, (or rather have been) that esteem all Places alike, with respect to our religious Services; and, allowing they only understand by it, that an Assembly of honest and upright Worshippers shall be heard and observ'd by Heaven, even from a Place of miserable Deformity and the very meanest Appearance, where fitter Accommodations are not to be come-at, they think not much amiss: But if they intend to insinuate thereby, that even any ordinary Receptacle of Beasts is of as good Advantage, with regard to

to the *Temper* of the *Worshippers*, as is the most *Holy Place*; or that *consecrated Places*, without any *Aid* of *external Ornaments*, are, as to the *Purposes* of *Religion*, of the same Effect with the more *improv'd* and *enrich'd* ones, they offer plain *Violence* to *Reason*, and open *Insult* to *common Sense*. The bare *Appropriation* of *Places* to the *publick Service* of *God*, and *Separation* of them from *vulgar Use*, are, no doubt, very excellent *Means* of raising and engaging *Reverence* in and for them; and put the case there is added *Magnificence* besides, a *solemn* and *fix'd Gravity* shall usually be impress'd upon the *Mind*, such as doth not frequently ensue upon the *opposite Circumstances* and *Conditions*. The *Tempers* of *Men*, it is well seen and known, are still *dependent* on those *Objects* that appear and pass before them, and either put on *Composedness* and *Seriousness*, or *Ludicrousness* and *Lightness*, as are the *Representations* of the *Senses*. Set a *Man* to *pray* in a *Stable*, or in a *Draught-House*, he will not, I apprehend, be able to *abstract* from the *baser Service* and *viler Direction* of the *Place*: In like manner, set a *Man* to *pray* in the *Church*, venerable indeed for the *Divine Presence* in it, but mean and contemptible in every respect else, and I much fear this *sensible Deformity*, join'd with a sort of *reproachful Idea* arising from it, must greatly lead the *Mind* aside, as to any *due Reflections* on the *Majesty* of *Heaven*. But where *sacred Exercises* are determin'd wholly to *sacred Places*, and these rendred so-

lemn and awful by every thing that is of any Vertue to convey only *respectful Impressions* and *Sentiments* to the Soul; there all Things conspire to form a *right Temper of Devotion*, which, in the present Case, cannot well fail the Man whose *Intentions* are honest and just, and that *worships God on Principle*. Next,

3. For the *Aptitude or Tendency of outward Majesty and Beauty* in the House of God, to elevate, refine, and ennoble the *Thoughts*. As the *human Constitution* hath been contriv'd and order'd, that the *Spirit* is, as it were, immers'd in *Flesh*, there is hardly any reaching and striking the *Soul* but by *Mediation* and *Means* of the *Senses*: And this one Thing, (which seems the *special Designation of Nature*,) is what mostly gives *outward Objects* so entire a Sway with us, even as to our *inward Motions*, and so provides them of an *uncontroll'd Ascendant* over our very *Thoughts*, as that the latter are usually made to follow the former; and we are led both to *conceive* and to *contemplate*, in a Sort of *Obedience* to those *outward Objects* and *Appearances* we converse with, and take *Impressions* from. And as our very *Thoughts* are under Influence of *sensible Things*, so, such as are these *sensible Things*, such must ordinarily be our *Thoughts*, elevated or low, *refin'd* or *coarse*, noble or base. Great and generous *Thoughts* will regularly be rais'd or occasion'd by *majestick* or

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magnificent Sights or Appearances; as vulgar or trifling ones will mostly start up or flow in from *Images and Objects* of a contrary Kind or Character. To apply these *general Reflections* to that *particular Case* here under Consideration: It looks as if the *outward Magnificence* or *Meanness* of the *Place or House* wherein we assemble for *publick Worship* gave a *suitable Turn* to our *Thoughts* There; a *Turn* strictly conformable to the *Report and Representation* of the *Senses*. Where we offer up our *Devotions* under all the *Excellencies and Elegancies* of *sensible Things*, we shall usually have the Mind possess'd wholly by *lofty and sublime Ideas*, answering well that *important Business* we are upon, and pointing us to him who from *above* beholds our *Services below*: For, tho' there is but small Affinity betwixt *Things sensible* and *spiritual*, yet, the *splendid Appearance* of the one shall direct and conduct the *Imagination* to the *other*; and even transient and fading *Glories* shall help to give us a *View* of those that are *eternal* and *unchangeable*. The *Scriptures* themselves are wont to shadow forth to us *heavenly Joys* under the *Images of earthly ones*; and this, for a special Reason, that we can at present no otherwise form any lively and affecting *Notion* of them. So, where, on the contrary, we approach to pay our *Tribute of publick Worship* in *Places or Houses* *slovenly and neglected*, offensive thro' *Defilements*, or less entertaining to the *Eye* thro' *Barrenness* of *Ornaments*, we shall not, I conclude,

clude, soar high in our *Meditations*, or reach any *elevated Pitch of Thought*, but be generally thrown upon *little and trivial Conceits and Sentiments*, such as a Sort of *bumbler Scene* or *darker Appearance* is proper only to suggest to us. The State of the *Mind* is confessedly the Thing of *prime Inquiry*, as to the Affair of *religious Worship*; and therefore some perhaps may declare themselves wholly *at a loss* to comprehend what it hath to do with *Externals*: But, how we can best come at the *Mind* under Covert of the *fleshy Part*, herein lieth the *Stress* of the Matter. Now *outward Appearances*, which are known to affect us in all *other Cases*, must affect us too in the *Case of religious Worship*; and therefore ought to be *such*, and *so contriv'd*, as that they may affect us after the *sublimest manner*. Then,

4. For the Aptitude or Tendency of *outward Majesty and Beauty* in the House of God, to warm, quicken, and enflame the *Affections*. As our *Thoughts*, we have seen, are under *Influence* from *without*, so our *Affections* too are pretty much dispos'd of and carried away by *outward Appearances*. Whatever is prepar'd to strike us with a sort of *Admiration*, which is the proper Effect of *Majesty* or *Magnificence* in *Externals*, the same is almost sure to engage our *Love* and *Fancy*, *Regards* and *Favour*. The first Step or *leading Motive* to *Affection*, is a *great* or *high Opinion* conceiv'd of the *Object*: where *fair Appearances* then attract the *Senses*,

and these again draw-in the *Judgment* to go along with them, (which is the usual Process) there *Affection* follows, as it were, instantly, and obtains of course. We cannot so well help *affecting* Things that come so powerfully recommended, and have gain'd our *Admiration*, or possess'd themselves of our *good Opinion*; And this, as it holds *anywhere* and in *anything*, must, upon the *same foot*, hold *every where* and in *every thing*. Applied to *publick Worship*, and the *House of God*, it *certifies* and *confirms* to us, that, in the Case of *outward Majesty* and *Beauty* taking first with the *Eye*, and presently after leading the *Mind* of the *Worshipper* into *solemn Veneration* of that *invisible Power* he stands *before*, it cannot *ordinarily* be otherwise but that his *Affections* should be greatly warm'd, quicken'd, and inflam'd towards *Almighty God*, that most *admirable*, and consequently most *amiable*, of all Beings. If it be said, that thus it may fare indeed with *vulgar Minds*, but with none else; I answer, those must be very *particular* and *uncommon Minds*, over which *outward Appearances* have no *Influence* or *Efficacy*. 'Tis the Law of our *Nature*, that the *Minds* of Men should receive *Impressions* by means of the *Senses*, and *various Impressions* as *Appearances* vary. The *strongest Minds* no more escape these, than the *weakest*; and if it imports any thing *vulgar* to be liable this way, *vulgar*, I apprehend, will signify the same as *universal*; and not to be rank'd with the *vulgar*, will only be attainable by

by divesting ourselves of the *very human Constitution*: Thus we see that *general Position*, the Truth whereof I, first, essay'd to make out, from the *universal Sense of Mankind appearing in special favour* of it, farther confirm'd to us, in the second Place, from the *nature or reason of the Thing*, consider'd strictly in itself: Namely, *The Influence or Efficacy of outward Majesty and Beauty in the House of God, to excite and promote true Devotion inwardly in the Minds of the Worshippers.*

It now only remains, that, having secur'd and settled my *Foundation*, I proceed to *Superstructure*; that is, close All with a few *Conclusions*, equally seasonable and useful, drawn from the *Premises*. And,

First, When such is the *Influence or Efficacy of outward Majesty and Beauty in the House of God, to excite and promote true Devotion inwardly in the Minds of the Worshippers*; this concludes plainly for the great *Importance and Excellency of outward Majesty and Beauty in the House of God*. *Outward Majesty and Beauty in the House of God*, may perhaps, even by some amongst ourselves, and these both *sensible and sober Christians*, be look'd upon as *Matters of much Indifferency and Inexpediency*, as to the real Interests and Service, Life and Power of *Religion*: If there is but *any Place*, whither they may have *Resort for publick Worship*, provided with the *proper Officers* and furnish'd with bare *necessary Conveniencies*, they are not solicitous, they tell us, about *Ornaments*; which they think may well enough be *spar'd*. But having

prov'd the *very contrary above*, I hope I shall here be allow'd to say, that these Men, tho' they may probably *mean well*, yet, *judge ill*. So long as People are in the *Flesh*, and in any Degree under reach of *sensible Things*, that is, in short, so long as Men are Men, compounded Beings, consisting of *Body* as well as *Spirit*, they will always need to be supported in their *religious Services* by *external Appearances*; and will always find themselves greatly *refresh'd* and *reliev'd* by them: Or, supposing there may be a few of those who are able to *abstract* and *refine*, withdraw from under the *Dominion of Sense*, and practise a sort of *angelick Devotion*, what are these few *abstracted* and *refin'd Theorists* to the *Bulk of Mankind*, who require to be dealt with after quite another manner. The Generality of Men will still want all the *Aid* we can possibly bring their *Devotions*, by the means of *external Advantages*; and, perhaps, when every thing hath been *done* for them, that *can be done* for them, they may yet be found *low* and *lukewarm*, *unaffected* and *unmov'd*, however to *any good Purpose*. 'Tis true, it is not the *Place* in which we *worship*, but the *Worship itself* we pay, that is ever of *prime Consideration*: Still the *very Place* is of *Consequence*, and the *Majesty* and *Beauty* of it of great *Importance*; I mean not, with regard to *God*, but to *ourselves*: This is the *grand Distinction*; and to this Purpose are those observable Words of our *judicious Mr. Hooker*: "*Albeit the true Worship of God be,*

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“to God, in itself acceptable, who respecteth not
 “so much in *what Place*, as with *what Affecti-*
 “*on* he is serv’d, — manifest, notwithstanding,
 “it is, that the very *Majesty* and *Holiness* of the
 “*Place* where God is worshipped, hath, in re-
 “gard of us, great Vertue, Force, or Efficacy;
 “for that it serveth as a *sensible Help* to stir up
 “*Devotion*, and in that respect, no doubt, bet-
 “tereth even our holiest and best Actions in this
 “kind*.” One cannot then but be concern’d
 at finding any *Member*, especially of the *Church*
 of *England*, so far under *Delusion*, as to plead
 for *Slovenliness* or *Nakedness* in the *House of God*,
 or indeed to excuse them. As our Business in re-
 sorting to the *Place of publick Worship* is *Devo-*
tion, and our *Devotion* There is best advanc’d by
 the *outward Majesty and Beauty* of the *Place it*
self, no Man that wisheth well to the *first*, can
 regularly appear against the *last*; that is, in
 short, no Man, who is a *real Friend to Religi-*
on, can properly be an Enemy to *Majesty* and
Beauty in the *House of God*. Again,

Secondly, When such is the *Influence* or
Efficacy of *outward Majesty and Beauty* in the
House of God, to excite and promote true *Devotion*
inwardly in the Minds of the Worshippers; this
 clearly concludes farther for the *Extravagance*
 of Those who are us’d to exclaim and inveigh bit-
 terly against all *Embellishments* and *Ornaments* in
 Places sacred or separated to *religious Worship*.
 These are the *Inventions*, say some Men, of Pa-
 gans,

* Hooker’s Eccles. Pol. B. 5. Sect. 16, p. 205.

gans, and ought not to be espous'd by *Christians*; or they *are*, they say, the *Corruptions* of *Papists*, and ought not to find Countenance with *Protestants*. But were not the *Israelitish Tabernacle* and *Jewish Temple* (and Both of special Counsel and Contrivance from the *most high*) as beautiful, rich, and elegant as *Art* and *Cost* could make them? And did not *Pagans*, as we have seen *above* *, take *Pattern* by These, and both in *raising stately Edifices* to their *idolatrous Worship*, and in *adorning* them with all kinds of excellent *Workmanship*, copy from what they saw the *Jews* do for the *true God*? *Pagans* then were no way *blameable* for their *stately and splendid Temples*, that we should hold these in so much *Abomination*, but for their *Worship in Superstition and Idolatry*. *Primitive Christians*, who have never been thought chargeable as *defective in Piety*, or in an *Abhorrence of Superstition and Idolatry*, could yet, without *Scruple*, when it came in their way, convert *Pagan Temples* into *Christian Churches* †, in which still remain'd all the *ornamental Part*, after that they had been thoroughly purg'd of their *offensive Furniture*, such as *Idols* and *Altars*. And for the Pretence of *Romish Corruptions*, it can be no reason to affect a sort of *rustick Plainness* or pure *Nakedness*, because the *Romish Church* may have gone into an *Excess of Pomp and Pageantry*, unless with *those* who know not how to avoid

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* Pag. 11. † Cave's Prim. Christ. part 1. ch. 6. p. 97. Bingham's Antiq. V. 3. B. 8. Ch. 2. §. 4.

one *Extreme*, without running themselves upon the *other*; which neither speaks *due Moderation*, nor yet any *Soundness of Judgment*. "Tho' the *Ornaments*, observes one ||, of such *Places* as "are dedicated to *God's Service*, ought to be "rather *grave* than *pompous*, yet it could never "sink into my Heart to imagine that the *Allowance* for *furnishing them out* should be measured by the scanty Rule of *meer Necessity*, — "especially seeing that, as in Prince's Courts "so in the Service of God, this *outward State* "and *Glory*, being well dispos'd, doth beget, "increase, quicken, and nourish the *inward* "Reverence and *respectful Devotion*, which is "due to so *Sovereign a Majesty*." But the Men I refer to, (to do them *Justice*) are greatly come off their *former Scruples* in this *Particular*, seeing that of *late Times* they have admitted (if I mistake not) not only *Decencies*, but *Decorations* too, into their *Houses of religious Worship*; and seem not now, as once, so very apprehensive of *symbolizing with Rome*, in the Use of every *innocent Ornament* or *Improvement*. Again,

Thirdly, When such is the *Influence* or *Efficacy* of *outward Majesty* and *Beauty* in the *House of God*, to excite and promote true *Devotion* inwardly in the *Minds of the Worshipers*; this fairly concludes, yet farther, for the *Praises* due to *those of you*, who have lately given *Encouragement* in any kind to the *repairing and restoring*

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|| Sir Edward Sandys's Spec. Europ.

restoring this our *House of solemn Assembly* for *Divine Worship*. Should you reap no other *Benefit* or *Advantage* from it, you may make sure at least of the *agreeable and comfortable Reflection* of having lent an helping Hand towards *reviving and recalling a sinking Spirit of Devotion*; which being the great *End of these Assemblies*, you have happily consulted, and that after the most pious and prudent Manner, the rendring our *assembling together* the most *useful and edifying*: And I already fancy, that I see this *Fruit of your Expence and Trouble*, *true Piety* putting on *new Life*, and the *publick Service of God* improv'd in equal Degree as is the *Place* appropriated to it. And as such must naturally be the *Result*, so such, I am willing to hope, hath all along been your *View*; whence, depending on the Goodness of your *Motives and Intentions*, I apprehend not how any *Murmurings* can accompany your *Labour of Love*, or *Discontents* follow it. Indeed it were a *Shame* or *Reproach* to us, never to be wip'd off, that, in an *Age* wherein Men spare no manner of *Cost* upon their own proper *Dwellings*, they should grudge even the *smallest Charge* in Honour of the *House of God*; and that in *Times* when every the most *fantastick Scene of Pleasure* is sure to find *Subscribers*, the only *solid and substantial Entertainment* should alone fail of *cheerful Contributors*. For your Parts, you have undertaken and finish'd an *excellent and use-*
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ful Work, to a right Purpose, and upon a right Principle; and therefore may make sure at least of the Applauses of a good Conscience: And I would have you be content at present with these Applauses, not only as they yield the most delicious Repast to the Mind, but as they are a Pledge or Earnest of there being yet behind a more consummate Recompence. Once again, and to have done,

Fourthly, when such is the Influence or Efficacy of outward Majesty and Beauty in the House of God, to excite and promote true Devotion inwardly in the Minds of the Worshipers; This concludes, finally, for the strict Obligations we are all of us under to take especial Care, that what hath lately been expended in Ornaments and Embellishments, Repairs and Improvements, upon this House wherein we are assembled, may have its proper Effect, and be not any way defeated of its genuine Fruit unto Holiness: We ought that is, all of us, to see that we increase in Piety, proportionably as are the Advantages we enjoy towards it; and that we actually rise in our Devotions, answerably to the Dignity of the Place in which we meet to perform them. We can now no more plead in Excuse for our Defects in religious Exercises, our Listlessness and Drowsiness, our Dulness of Spirit and Deadness of Affection; we can, I say, no more plead the Deformity, Nakedness, or slovenly Appearance

of God's House, the Place appropriated to these Services : On the contrary, we are possess'd of all Kinds of *external Assistances* that can well be of Use and Application to the ripening, strengthening, and enlivening our Devotions, the giving them *Vivacity*, and upholding them in *Vigor* : And therefore you must bear with me in saying, that if, notwithstanding all, you yet find your selves not so well dispos'd to those Duties which will be requir'd and expected of you here, but even still feel an *oppressive Flatness and Lowness of Spirits and Affections* towards religious Acts and Exercises ; you must bear with me in saying, you bring to Church with you, either some *secret Dislike* to the Service ; or *sensual Views* quite foreign to the Business of the Place ; or *strong Prepossessions of secular and worldly Cares* ; or, in short, a *general Coldness to Religion*. Where but any one of these is the Case, there is no outward Majesty and Beauty conceivable in the House of God that will be able to reach you, and strike you after an heavenly Sort ; but all Majesty and Beauty of sensible Appearance, in like manner as every kind of Application else, must be rendred altogether vain and empty. For, notwithstanding there may be an *Aptitude or Tendency*, even naturally, of outward Majesty and Beauty in the House of God, to excite and promote true Devotion inwardly in the Minds of Men, yet

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is not this natural *Aptitude* or *Tendency* so violent and irresistible, but that it is *liable to be defeated*; and actually must be so, where, instead of encouraging and cherishing the *sacred Influence*, we dispose ourselves to run *directly counter to it*. When then we have consulted, the best we can, the *Honour and Glory of God*, in the *Perfection of Man*, by Means of such *external Advantages*, as, through help of the *Imagination and Senses*, may most *powerfully affect* and *strike the Soul*, all will be in apparent Danger of being *lost* and *thrown away* upon us, at the last, unless we join our own *Endeavours* to make a *proper Use* of these so great *Assistances* towards *forming a right Spirit within us*. The World may be suppos'd to furnish us with *Numbers* of generous *Benefactors* and pious *Contributors* to the *outward Majesty and Beauty* of God's House; and such *outward Majesty and Beauty* may have an *Aptitude* or *Tendency*, naturally, to the making us *inwardly holy and devout*, and yet no *Good* arise from thence at length, because we are wanting, either in our *Preparation* for the Benefit, or in our *Direction* of it; Either we do not *qualify ourselves* so as we may *receive* it, or we do not *apply the Thing* so as that it may *answer the special Ends* of it. But, sure, we very far *abuse any Advantage* we enjoy, either in not suffering it to *take*, or in not *turning it to Good*: Either way we are guilty of *not improving an Advantage*; and *not improving an Advantage* is the same as *abusing it*.

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-For a *Close*, my Request to you all is this, that you would not fail punctually to *reflect* and *remember*, that *outward Majesty and Beauty* still *refer* you to *inward Worth and Excellency*; and that worshipping God under any *pompous Appearance of stately Edifices and costly Appurtenances*, is but a *pious Contrivance*, by Application to the *Senses*, the more forcibly to strike the *Soul*, which, in this *thick Veil of Flesh*, cannot any other way be so well *affected* or come at.

F I N I S.

